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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3926th meeting of the Security Council, held on 15 September 1998 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council strongly condemns the murder of Iranian diplomats in Afghanistan by Taliban combatants. This was a crime committed in flagrant violation of international law and despite repeated assurances by the Taliban leaders guaranteeing the safety and security of the personnel of foreign missions in Mazar-e-Sharif. The killing of Iranian diplomats by Taliban combatants has seriously increased tension in the region.

The Security Council expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the Iranian diplomats and to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It believes that this criminal act should be fully investigated with the participation of the United Nations with a view to prosecuting those responsible. The Council demands that the Taliban release other Iranians detained in Afghanistan and ensure their safe and dignified passage out of Afghanistan without further delay.

The Security Council recalls its condemnation of the murders of members of the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan and the personnel of humanitarian agencies in areas controlled by the Taliban and demands that these crimes be investigated and the Taliban ensure the safety and security of all international personnel.

The Security Council expresses its deep concern at the escalating military operations in the Bamyan province and at reports of mass killings of civilians in northern Afghanistan. It demands that the Taliban fully respect international humanitarian law and human rights.

The Security Council calls upon all concerned to exercise maximum restraint. It also calls upon the parties, in particular the Taliban, to take action in response to the strong concerns expressed by the international community, to stop fighting and resume negotiations aimed at achieving a

peaceful settlement of the conflict on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

The Security Council will keep the situation under close review and is prepared to consider urgently further action.

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3927th meeting of the Security Council, held on 16 September 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 13 April 1998 on 'The causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa', which was submitted to the Security Council (S/1998/318) and the General Assembly (A/52/871). It agrees with the Secretary-General that the credibility of the United Nations in Africa to a great extent depends upon the willingness of the international community to act and to explore new means of advancing the objectives of peace and security in the African continent.

"The Security Council, which has the primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for international peace and security, expresses its commitment to exercising this responsibility in relation to Africa, and affirms that strengthening Africa's capacity to participate in all aspects of peacekeeping operations, including their military, police, humanitarian and other civilian components, is a key priority.

'The Security Council encourages increased bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the field of peacekeeping, especially capacity-building, between Member States, the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as well as subregional organizations in Africa. It welcomes the efforts already undertaken by the United Nations and Member States to promote greater transparency and coordination in multilateral efforts to enhance Africa's capacity for peacekeeping. In particular, it welcomes efforts to implement the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General of 1 November 1995 on 'Improving preparedness for conflict prevention and peace-keeping in Africa' (S/1995/911) and to follow up the outcome of the meetings organized by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in December 1997 and May 1998. It encourages all States and organizations concerned to work with African States in particular on the basis of African initiatives and proposals.

"The Security Council encourages contributions, financial and in kind, aimed at enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity. In particular, it urges Member States to contribute to the trust funds established by the United Nations and the OAU to improve preparedness for conflict prevention and peacekeeping in Africa.

"The Security Council affirms the role of the United Nations in setting general standards for peacekeeping, and urges compliance with existing United Nations guidelines, including through the use of the Ten Rules Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets, which were elaborated following a request by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/51/230). It encourages all those involved in enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity to ensure that training for and the conduct of peacekeeping give due emphasis to international humanitarian law and human rights, including the rights of the child, as well as to gender issues. It requests all those conducting peacekeeping operations in Africa to pay particular attention to the situation of children in armed conflict, as appropriate, both in mandates for and reports about such operations.

"The Security Council supports the efforts of the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations as well as Member States in the field of training for peacekeeping.

"The Security Council welcomes the readiness of the United Nations to act as a clearing house for information on available training initiatives. It particularly welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations database on training. With the aim of strengthening Africa's peacekeeping capacity, the Security Council requests the Secretary-General to pursue these plans, and to include in the database information about African needs in this field, possible regional and extra-regional contributions to assist in achieving this goal, and available expertise on training. It encourages Member States and regional and subregional organizations to contribute information to the database. It encourages the Secretary-General to consider possible further uses and broadening of United Nations databases, for instance in humanitarian crises.

"The Security Council also welcomes the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish an informal working group composed of African and non-African States directly involved or interested in the provision of training assistance.

"The Security Council emphasizes the value of training aimed at improving coordination and cooperation among military, police, humanitarian and other civilian components of peacekeeping operations. It encourages the Secretary-General and Member States to engage international and non-governmental humanitarian organizations, as appropriate, in peacekeeping training activities.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of the availability of appropriately trained personnel and relevant equipment for all components of peacekeeping operations. In this context, it encourages increased

participation by Member States, in particular from Africa, in the United Nations standby arrangements. The Council further encourages the use of United Nations Training Assistance Teams as a useful tool in support of national peacekeeping training. It recognizes the value of joint training exercises, as well as the establishment of partnerships between States whose contingents require equipment and States and organizations that are able to assist them. It also encourages the exchange of lessons learned from previous operations.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to study ways to improve the availability of logistics for peacekeeping efforts in Africa.

"The Security Council stresses the need for it to be fully informed of peacekeeping activities carried out or planned by regional or subregional organizations and underlines that the improved flow of information and the holding of regular briefing meetings between members of the Council, African regional and subregional organizations involved in peacekeeping operations and troop contributors and other participating Member States have an important role to play in helping enhance African peacekeeping capacity. In that context, the Council encourages the Secretary-General to establish appropriate United Nations liaison with regional and subregional organizations and invites those organizations and Member States to provide the Security Council and the Secretary-General with information on their activities in the field of peacekeeping."

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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3931st meeting of the Security Council, held on 24 September 1998 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council met on 24 September 1998, at the level of Foreign Ministers, in accordance with its resolution 1170 (1998) of 28 May 1998, to assess progress in achieving peace and security in Africa since the last Ministerial Meeting on 25 September 1997. It recalls the statement of its President (S/PRST/1997/46) of 25 September 1997 and reiterates its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report of 13 April 1998 (A/52/871-S/1998/318).

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to Africa in the areas of conflict prevention and the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations. It also reaffirms the principles of the political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States.

"The Security Council underlines that peaceful societies rest upon respect for fundamental human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person. It recognizes the close linkage between the promotion of economic and social development and the prevention of conflict. It stresses that the quest for peace in Africa requires a comprehensive, concerted and determined approach, encompassing the eradication of poverty, the promotion of democracy, sustainable development and respect for human rights, as well as conflict prevention and resolution, including peacekeeping, and humanitarian assistance. It underlines that genuine political will is necessary, in Africa and beyond, to achieve durable results towards these ends, and stresses the urgent need for Member States, the United Nations system, including the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, the international financial institutions and other relevant organizations to continue to consider appropriate action in response to the comprehensive recommendations set out by the Secretary-General in his report.

"The Security Council recognizes the positive developments in Africa in the past year and welcomes progress achieved by African States in

promoting democratization, economic reform, the protection of human rights and sustainable development. It commends efforts by African States and regional and subregional organizations, in particular the Organization of African Unity, to resolve conflicts by peaceful means. It welcomes progress made in Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic, and in the peace process in Burundi. It urges all States and relevant bodies to provide financial and technical support to strengthen African regional and subregional arrangements for conflict prevention, the maintenance of peace and security and dispute settlement. It calls for an enhanced partnership between the United Nations and African regional and subregional organizations in support of these efforts.

"The Security Council expresses its continuing concern over the number and intensity of, and the interrelationship among, conflicts in Africa, and especially at the emergence of new conflicts during the past year. The border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the resurgence of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the impasse in the peace process in Angola, the continued violence in Sierra Leone, and the complex emergencies in Somalia and Sudan, among others, cause grave concern. These situations, which in some cases threaten the stability of large parts of the continent, call for concerted action by African States, the international community and the United Nations system to prevent further tragedy.

"The Security Council urgently calls on African States and all parties concerned to demonstrate the political will to settle their disputes by peaceful rather than military means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and to respect international humanitarian law and the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of States in the region. It also encourages States in the region to continue to improve the implementation of good governance and undertake the various reforms needed to promote economic growth. It calls upon the international community to assist those efforts initiated by African States and regional and subregional organizations aimed at such goals.

"For its part, the Security Council expresses its renewed commitment to contributing to conflict resolution in Africa. In this context, it recalls its decisions during the past year to authorize two new United Nations peacekeeping operations, in the Central African Republic and Sierra Leone, to assist efforts towards peace and national reconciliation. It also expresses its determination to improve further its ability to prevent conflicts, and to make its responses to conflicts more efficient and effective, and underlines its support for measures taken within the United Nations system to strengthen post-conflict peace-building efforts.

"The Security Council, based on the recommendations of its ad hoc Working Group established pursuant to its resolution 1170 (1998), has already begun to take concrete steps as part of a wider, comprehensive response to the recommendations put forward by the Secretary-General. It has taken action to help strengthen support for regional and subregional initiatives as well as to enhance coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the areas of conflict

prevention and the maintenance of peace. It has also taken action in order to strengthen the effectiveness of arms embargoes imposed by the Council and addressed the need to support the strengthening of African peacekeeping capacity.

"The Security Council encourages the ad hoc Working Group to continue its work, in accordance with its mandate, and to elaborate further concrete recommendations to the Council, in particular on the need to stem illicit arms flows to and in Africa and with regard to measures to assist host Governments in Africa in maintaining the security and neutrality of refugee camps and to enhance the ability of the Council to monitor activities authorized by it but carried out by Member States or coalitions of Member States.

"The Security Council, recognizing that the challenge of achieving peace and security in Africa is a continuous process, will continue to assess progress in promoting peace and security in Africa at the level of Foreign Ministers, on a biennial basis, in accordance with its resolution 1170 (1998)."